



HQ-650
AC NO: 90-46

DATE: 8/19/69

ADVISORY CIRCULAR

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: DEPICTION OF HOLDING PATTERNS

1. **PURPOSE.** This circular provides information concerning the Federal Aviation Administration plan to chart holding patterns and the course of action to be followed by pilots when holding is required.
2. **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This program will be implemented 13 November 1969. All charts used in the cockpit will be effective on that date and will contain the same holding pattern information.
3. **REFERENCES.** Airman's Information Manual (AIM), Part 1.
4. **GENERAL.**
 - a. The FAA conducts a continuous program to reduce to the minimum the verbiage used by both controllers and pilots in the control of air traffic. Although much has been accomplished in this area in recent years, the constant increase in traffic and that projected for the future requires persistent effort to assure that pilot and controller workloads are not complicated by unnecessary ATC phraseology.
 - b. While meeting the intent of the foregoing, there must also be assurance that safety factors are not jeopardized and, further, that both the pilot and controller understand each other's plan and circumstances at the moment as well as those projected to meet changing traffic conditions.
 - c. It is considered reasonable that the controller eliminate redundant ATC verbiage if the pilot has the required information available in a format he is accustomed to using; i.e., a chart containing all the information he needs for the function of the flight he is conducting. The standard instrument departure program is based on this concept. Further support for this concept is that

the controller does not normally describe an airway, or a fix, or the procedure to be followed in conducting an ILS (or any type) approach. His verbal description is not required because the information is charted.

d. This concept is being applied in the charting of holding patterns.

5. CHARTING DETAILS.

- a. Either standard or nonstandard holding patterns at fixes most consistently used to serve a terminal area/airport by either an air route traffic control center (ARTCC) or a terminal facility will be charted.
- b. Holding patterns will be charted on either or both United States Government En Route High/Low Altitude and appropriate Area Charts. Any holding pattern may be shown on both the en route and the area charts if the fix is consistently used for holding both en route and terminal traffic.
- c. Patterns at en route fixes may be charted if aircraft are consistently held at those fixes by the ARTCC.
- d. Only one pattern will be shown at a fix on an individual chart and patterns will not be labeled with altitude information or letter coding for any special purposes.

6. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR PILOTS.

- a. If you are required to hold at a fix where the pattern is charted, ATC will not issue holding instructions. You will be expected to hold in the pattern depicted unless otherwise advised by ATC.
- b. If you are required to hold at a fix where the pattern is not charted, you will be given holding instructions by ATC at least five minutes before you are estimated to reach the clearance limit.
- c. If you do not receive a clearance beyond the fix before arrival over the fix and the holding pattern is charted, maintain the last assigned altitude and begin holding in accordance with the pattern depicted.

- d. If you do not receive a clearance beyond the fix before arrival over the fix and the holding pattern is not charted, begin holding in a standard holding pattern on the course on which you approach the fix. (NOTE: The actions cited above should not be related in any way to the procedures applicable when a two-way radio failure occurs. The procedures governing pilot action in the event of a two-way radio failure are contained in the AIM, Part 1.)
- e. As a cardinal rule, if there is any doubt as to the holding procedure you are to follow, request instructions from ATC.
- f. The AIM is being revised to reflect the concept herein.

7. **INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION.** In order to provide the broadest exposure to the contents of this Advisory Circular, organizations which publish bulletins to their members are requested to include in such bulletins any part or all of the foregoing material.



William M. Flenner
William M. Flenner, Director
Air Traffic Service

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business



POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION